

In the Claims

1. **(currently amended):** A process for improving the rheological properties of aqueous pigment compositions which process comprises ultrasonic treatment at a frequency of 16 to 100 kHz of aqueous pigment dispersions or suspensions.
2. **(original):** The process according to claim 1 wherein the pigment compositions contain organic or inorganic pigments, or mixtures thereof.
3. **(currently amended):** The process according to claim 2 wherein the organic pigments are monoazo, disazo, azomethin, naphthol (β -naphthol) or metal-complex pigments, ~~such as phthalocyanines and azomethin metal complex pigments.~~
4. **(currently amended):** The process according to claim 2 wherein the inorganic pigments are titanium oxide pigments, iron oxide and hydroxide pigments, chromium oxide pigments, spinel type calcined pigments, lead chromate pigments, bismuth vanadate pigments, carbon black ~~and or~~ Prussian Blue.
5. **(currently amended):** The process according to ~~any of claim~~[[s]] 1 ~~to 4~~ wherein the solids content of the aqueous pigment compositions is from 20 to 70%, ~~preferably from 30 to 70%, based on the weight of the composition.~~
6. **(currently amended):** The process according to ~~any of claim~~[[s]] 1 ~~to 5~~ wherein the aqueous pigment compositions contain further additives, ~~including polymers, dispersants, antifoams and biocides.~~
7. **(currently amended):** The process according to ~~any of claim~~[[s]] 1 ~~to 6~~ wherein the ultrasonic treatment is carried out in a flow-through-, single pass- or re-circulation-system for a period of time from about 5 seconds up to 5 minutes, ~~preferably from about 5 seconds to about 2 minutes.~~
8. **(currently amended):** The process according to ~~any of claim~~[[s]] 1 ~~to 7~~ wherein the frequency of ultrasound is from 16 to 40 kHz, ~~preferably from 16 to 20 kHz.~~
9. **(cancelled).**

10. **(currently amended)**: Aqueous pigment compositions of improved rheological properties obtained according to the process ~~(method)~~ according to ~~any of claim[[s]] 1, to 9.~~

11. **(currently amended)**: ~~Use of the Colourant compositions comprising the aqueous pigment compositions according to claim 10, for preparing colourant compositions, preferably inks or paints.~~

12. **(new)**: The process according to claim 3 wherein the metal-complex pigments are phthalocyanines or azomethin metal-complex pigments.

13. **(new)**: The process according to claim 6 wherein the additives are polymers, dispersants, antifoams or biocides.

14. **(new)**: The process according to claim 7 wherein the period of time is from about 5 seconds to about 2 minutes.

15. **(new)**: The process according to claim 1 wherein the frequency of ultrasound is from 16 to 20 kHz.

16. **(new)**: Colourant compositions according to claim 11 which are inks or paints.